

# POLICY

## Complaints Portal & Handling Policy

DanceSport Australia Ltd.

ACN 085 929 835

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*This Policy establishes the Complaints Portal operated by DanceSport Australia as the primary channel through which Members and the public may submit formal complaints. It defines the procedures for submission, registration, document management, and resolution of complaints.*

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# 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a clear, accessible and accountable process for receiving, recording, managing, and resolving complaints made to DanceSport Australia. It ensures that complaints are handled consistently, that complainants are treated fairly, and that Administrators have the tools and procedures necessary to investigate and act on the matters raised.

This Policy also sets out the operation of the Complaints Portal — the online system through which complaints are submitted by the public and managed by DanceSport Australia Administrators.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the Ethics Committee Charter and the Chairperson Committee Charter.**

# 2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Policy applies to:

- (a) Members of DanceSport Australia, including Affiliate Members, Individual Members and Life Members, in all dealings with the Company and with each other in their capacity as Members;
- (b) Members of the public who wish to lodge a complaint concerning DanceSport Australia, its Members, its sanctioned events, or persons acting on its behalf;
- (c) Directors, the Chief Executive Officer, employees, contractors and volunteers of the Company in the receipt, registration, management and resolution of complaints;
- (d) Administrators of the Complaints Portal authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to access the system.

This Policy does not apply to:

- (a) general enquiries (which are dealt with through the Contact form on the DanceSport Australia website);
- (b) reportable conduct matters that must be referred directly to Sport Integrity Australia, the Police, or a child-protection authority;
- (c) internal grievances between employees of the Company (which are dealt with under the Company's employment policies).

# 3. AUTHORITY

This Policy is made by the Directors under clauses 7.2 and 20.1 of the Constitution and is binding on all Members under clause 20.2.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

Defined terms in clause 1.1 of the Constitution apply to this Policy. The following additional terms apply:

- Administrator means a person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to access the Complaints Portal in an administrative capacity.
- Chairpersons Committee means the standing committee responsible for considering complaints concerning DanceSport Australia's sporting rules and the conduct of those rules, including matters relating to adjudication and the conduct of competitors.
- Complainant means a person who has lodged a complaint through the Complaints Portal, whether or not that person is a Member.
- Complaint means a formal expression of dissatisfaction submitted through the Complaints Portal concerning DanceSport Australia, its Members, its sanctioned events, or any person acting on its behalf.
- Complaints Portal means the online system operated by DanceSport Australia at [dancesport.org.au/complaint](https://dancesport.org.au/complaint) for the submission of complaints, and the corresponding administrative interface within the DanceSport Australia Control Panel.
- Ethics Committee means the standing committee of DanceSport Australia responsible for considering complaints concerning the conduct, integrity or ethical behaviour of Members, officials or persons acting on behalf of DanceSport Australia.
- National Integrity & Complaints Manager means the officer appointed by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer, responsible for the triage and resolution of complaints under this Policy.
- Reference Number means the unique identifier assigned to each complaint at the time of submission, in the format DSA-CMP-nnnnnn.
- Supporting Document means a PDF file attached to a complaint, whether at the time of submission by the Complainant or subsequently by an Administrator.
- Ethics Committee refers to the Ethics Committee established as a DanceSport Australia Board Committee.

## 5. POLICY STATEMENT

### 5.1 Principles

DanceSport Australia is committed to:

- (a) providing an accessible, transparent and confidential means for any person to lodge a complaint;
- (b) treating all complaints seriously, fairly, and without prejudice to the Complainant;
- (c) acknowledging every complaint promptly and progressing it without undue delay;
- (d) ensuring that complaints are recorded, investigated, and resolved by persons with appropriate authority and free from conflict of interest;
- (e) maintaining the confidentiality of complaints to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the proper investigation of the matter;
- (f) retaining complete records of complaints, supporting documents, and resolution actions for audit, governance, and continuous-improvement purposes.

## 5.2 Application of Principles

The principles in section 5.1 are given effect through:

- (a) the public submission interface described in section 6.1, which is the primary channel for lodging a complaint;
- (b) the administrative interface described in section 6.2, through which authorised Administrators register, review, document, and close complaints;
- (c) the supporting controls described in section 6.3, which protect the integrity of the Complaints Portal against automated abuse and ensure complaints are received only from genuine submitters;
- (d) the records-management requirements described in section 6.4, which ensure that complaint information is preserved, secured, and able to be audited.

## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Public Submission of a Complaint

A complaint may be lodged by any person — Member or non-Member — using the public submission form at [dancesport.org.au/complaint](https://dancesport.org.au/complaint).

#### Submitting a complaint:

- (a) the Complainant accesses the public submission form and provides their full name, contact email, and (optionally) a contact telephone number;
- (b) a DanceSport Australia member number (CID) may be entered if the Complainant is a Member, but membership is not a precondition to lodging a complaint;
- (c) the Complainant enters a Subject describing the complaint in short form and the full Complaint Details in the larger text area;
- (d) up to five (5) Supporting Documents may be attached at the time of submission, each in PDF format and not exceeding ten (10) megabytes in size;
- (e) the Complainant completes the security CAPTCHA displayed on the form and submits the complaint.
- (f) *Anonymous complaints cannot be lodged*

#### On successful submission:

- (a) the complaint is assigned a Reference Number in the format DSA-CMP-nnnnnn and registered in the Complaints Register;
- (b) a confirmation email is sent to the email address provided by the Complainant, recording the Reference Number, the Subject, and a copy of the complaint as submitted;
- (c) a notification email is sent to the Administration Team to alert them that a new complaint has been registered;
- (d) an on-screen receipt page is displayed confirming successful submission and displaying the Reference Number for the Complainant's records.

The Complainant should retain the Reference Number and quote it in any future correspondence concerning the complaint.

## 6.2 Administration of Complaints

Administrators access the Complaints Portal through the DanceSport Australia Control Panel using their existing DSA Administrator login. Only persons granted permission to access the complaints portal by the Chief Executive Officer may access the administrative interface.

Those complaints not referred to Sports Integrity Australia by the National Integrity & Complaints Manager will generally be referred to the Ethics Committee or Chairperson Committee for investigation, determination and where possible closure.

The Chair of the Ethics Committee and Chair of the Chairperson Committee are authorised Administrators.

### Accessing the Complaints Register:

- (a) Administrators log in to the DSA Control Panel using their administrator credentials;
- (b) the Complaints option in the Control Panel opens the Complaints Register, listing all complaints registered in the system;
- (c) the Register may be filtered to display All complaints, only Open complaints, or only Closed complaints;
- (d) a search function is available to locate complaints by Subject, Complaint text, email address, or Member number.

### Viewing and editing a complaint:

- (a) selecting a complaint from the Register opens the detail view, displaying all complaint information, the list of Supporting Documents, and the available actions;
- (b) any field of a complaint may be amended by an Administrator using the Edit Complaint function — for example to correct a misspelt name, update a contact email address, or annotate the Complaint Details with additional information received subsequent to submission;
- (c) a complaint that has been received outside the public submission form (for example, by letter, telephone, or in person) may be entered directly by an Administrator using the New Complaint function. However, best practice is for the complainant to be referred to this portal so they can enter their own submission into the database.

### Managing Supporting Documents:

- (a) Supporting Documents may be attached to a complaint at any time after registration, regardless of whether they were submitted with the original complaint;
- (b) each document is classified as either Incoming (received from the Complainant or a third party) or Outgoing (sent by DanceSport Australia in response to the complaint), so that the full correspondence record is preserved within the complaint file;
- (c) documents must be in PDF format. Where original correspondence is received in another format (such as a Word document, email, or image), it must first be converted or printed to PDF before being attached;
- (d) each Supporting Document is recorded with the date and time of upload, a description, the direction (Incoming or Outgoing), and the name of the Administrator who attached it;
- (e) documents may be removed from a complaint by an Administrator using the Remove function. A removed document is marked inactive and no longer displayed, but is retained in the underlying records for audit purposes.

### **Closing a complaint:**

- (a) a complaint is closed when the matter has been resolved, withdrawn, referred to another body, or determined not to require further action;
- (b) an Administrator closes a complaint using the Close Complaint function. The complaint is marked Closed and the date and time of closure are recorded;
- (c) a closed complaint remains in the Complaints Register and may be reopened by an Administrator using the Reopen Complaint function if further information is received or further action is required;
- (d) complaints are not deleted from the Complaints Register. Closure is the final administrative action; the complete record is retained in accordance with section 6.4.

## **6.3 Integrity Controls**

The public submission interface is protected by the following controls to prevent automated abuse, accidental duplicate submissions, and submissions containing offensive content:

- (a) a CAPTCHA challenge that must be completed before submission;
- (b) a minimum time interval of ten (10) seconds between the form being loaded and the complaint being submitted, defeating high-speed automated submission;
- (c) an abuse-language filter that detects words and phrases prohibited from use in correspondence with DanceSport Australia; submissions containing such words are rejected and the Complainant is invited to resubmit in measured terms;
- (d) a duplicate-subject check that compares each new complaint against the most recently registered complaint and rejects exact duplicates as suspected re-submissions;
- (e) server-side validation of each attached Supporting Document, including verification of the file extension, the declared media type, and the file's binary signature (the PDF magic-byte header).

These controls operate automatically. Where a legitimate submission is rejected by one of these controls (for example, because a Complainant inadvertently entered prohibited language), the Complainant may resubmit through the form or may contact the Administration Team via the Contact form for assistance.

## **6.4 Records Management**

Complaint records are managed as follows:

- (a) each complaint, together with all Supporting Documents, is retained in the Complaints Register for a minimum of seven (7) years from the date of closure, or for such longer period as the Company is required to retain the records by law;
- (b) complaint records are stored on the Company's secure infrastructure and are accessible only to authorised Administrators;
- (c) Supporting Documents that have been removed from a complaint are retained in the underlying records (marked inactive) and are not displayed in the administrative interface;
- (d) the Complaints Register is backed up as part of the Company's routine database backup schedule;
- (e) any disclosure of complaint information outside DanceSport Australia is made only by the Chief Executive Officer or the Board, and only as required by law or as necessary for the proper investigation and resolution of the complaint.

## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 7.1 National Integrity & Complaints Manager

The National Integrity & Complaints Manager is the first point of contact within DanceSport Australia for every complaint received through the Complaints Portal. The role is one of triage to resolution: assessing each complaint as it arrives, determining the appropriate pathway, and either resolving the matter directly or assigning it to the right body.

The National Integrity & Complaints Manager is responsible for:

- accessing every complaint registered through the Complaints Portal, including those received via the public submission form and those entered manually by Administrators;
- assessing each complaint for validity, completeness, jurisdiction and any conflict of interest;
- determining the most appropriate person, committee or external body to resolve the complaint;
- referring complaints internally to the Ethics Committee, the Chairpersons Committee, the Chief Executive Officer, or the Board of Directors, as the nature of the matter requires;
- referring complaints externally to Sport Integrity Australia where the matter falls within that body's national integrity remit;
- referring complaints to the Police, in extreme cases, where the matter involves criminal conduct, threats of violence, or a risk to safety;
- acknowledging receipt of each complaint with the complainant in a respectful and timely manner;
- maintaining oversight of all complaints through to resolution, and reporting on complaints activity to the Chief Executive Officer.

### 7.2 Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee is the standing committee responsible for considering complaints that raise matters of professional conduct, integrity, or ethical behaviour on the part of Members, officials or persons acting on behalf of DanceSport Australia. The Ethics Committee handles the ethical dimension of complaints, as distinct from sporting-rules matters which are the province of the Chairpersons Committee.

The Ethics Committee is responsible for:

- considering complaints referred to it by the National Integrity & Complaints Manager;
- conducting fair, impartial and confidential review of the matters before it;
- seeking further information from the complainant, the respondent, or any other person where required to reach a sound determination;
- making findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors, or imposing such sanctions as it is authorised to impose under DanceSport Australia's Code of Conduct and Member Protection Policy;
- recording its deliberations and outcomes so that the complaint record in the Complaints Register is complete.

### 7.3 Chairpersons Committee

The Chairpersons Committee is the standing committee that considers complaints that concern DanceSport Australia's sporting rules and the conduct of those rules — particularly the marking of competitors by adjudicators, and the conduct of competitors themselves. The Chairpersons Committee handles sporting matters that go beyond the purely ethical (which are the province of the Ethics Committee) and that cross into the application or interpretation of the sporting rules.

The Chairpersons Committee is responsible for:

- considering complaints referred to it by the National Integrity & Complaints Manager that relate to the sporting rules, adjudication, or competitor conduct;
- reviewing the application and interpretation of DanceSport Australia's sporting rules in the context of complaints raised;
- reviewing the conduct of adjudicators in their marking of competitors, where a complaint puts that marking in question;
- reviewing the conduct of competitors where the complaint concerns adherence to or breach of the sporting rules;
- making findings on the complaint and, where appropriate, recommending corrective action consistent with the sporting rules and the disciplinary framework;
- recommending amendments to the sporting rules to the Board of Directors where the complaint process has identified a gap, ambiguity or weakness in the existing rules;
- ensuring consistency of practice across competitions in the application of the sporting rules.

### 7.4 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- approving this Policy and any subsequent amendments;
- appointing the National Integrity & Complaints Manager on the recommendation of the Chief Executive Officer;
- reviewing complaints data, including volume and trends, at each ordinary Board meeting;
- considering complaints referred to it by the National Integrity & Complaints Manager, the Ethics Committee, the Chairpersons Committee or the Chief Executive Officer for determination;
- making final determinations on complaints that require Board-level resolution.

### 7.5 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- operating and maintaining the Complaints Portal;
- recommending the appointment of the National Integrity & Complaints Manager to the Board of Directors;
- supporting the National Integrity & Complaints Manager in the discharge of their responsibilities;
- granting and revoking Administrator access to the Complaints Portal;
- ensuring that all complaints are progressed in a timely manner;
- preparing a summary of complaints activity for each ordinary Board meeting.

## 7.6 Administrators

Administrators of the Complaints Portal are responsible for:

- registering, reviewing and progressing complaints assigned to them by the National Integrity & Complaints Manager;
- attaching Supporting Documents to complaints as correspondence is received or generated;
- communicating with Complainants in a respectful and timely manner as appropriate;
- closing complaints when matters are resolved, withdrawn, or referred;
- maintaining the confidentiality of complaint information.

## 7.7 Members

Members are responsible for:

- using the Complaints Portal in good faith and only for the submission of bona fide complaints;
- providing accurate and complete information when lodging a complaint;
- cooperating with the National Integrity & Complaints Manager, with any committee considering their complaint, and with Administrators in the investigation of any complaint to which the Member is a party.

## 8. BREACH AND NON-COMPLIANCE

A breach of this Policy may be referred under the Member Protection Policy or under clause 7.2 of the Constitution and may result in disciplinary action.

The lodging of a complaint that is knowingly false, vexatious, or made for an improper purpose is itself a breach of this Policy and of the DanceSport Australia Code of Conduct.

## 9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- DanceSport Australia Constitution — clauses 7.2, 20.1, and 20.2
- Member Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy
- Sport Integrity Australia — National Integrity Framework
- Ethics Committee Charter
- Chairperson Committee Charter

## 10. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if required by changes to the Constitution, applicable law, or operational need. The Directors may amend this Policy at any time. An amended Policy takes effect 7 days after service on Members in accordance with clause 20.1(b) of the Constitution.

## 11. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date	Approved by	Summary of changes
1.0	[date]	Board of Directors	Initial Policy adopted.
1.1	[date]	Board of Directors	Roles section expanded: added National Integrity & Complaints Manager (triage to resolution), Ethics Committee (conduct and integrity matters), and Chairpersons Committee (sporting rules, adjudication, competitor conduct). Corresponding definitions added.